

ever. Amen." Whether or not this declaration fell from the lips of the Son of God, at the time he taught his disciples how to pray, it is nevertheless true, and it may safely and properly be used as often as we use the Lord's prayer.

A few more thoughts. These disciples felt just like many sincere Christians do now: They felt like praying, but they felt the need of being taught how to pray. With this feeling they came to the Master and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples." Our Lord and Master did not say to them, you must not have a form of prayer, but must try, to the best of your ability, to express your feelings in such language as you can command at the time. Instead of this he at once yielded to their proper request, and taught them how to pray. If it is not wrong for the wisdom of heaven to frame and enjoin a form of prayer, surely it is right for the child of God, guided by the Holy Spirit, to study how to pray, and to select the most becoming and expressive language, and to frame suitable forms of prayer. Every disciple may come to Jesus and seek to be taught how to pray on every occasion, and he, by his word and the Holy Spirit, will grant the request. But when we ask for his guidance, we must use the powers and means that God has given us. If we do this we will have all the help we need.

In conclusion, let us take this lesson to heart, that in all of our efforts to pray we should always be sincere. We should never allow ourselves to become formal and to use words however becoming, if we do not feel or mean just what we say. A fine prayer, eloquently offered, might benefit those who hear it, but if the worshiper's heart is not in it, if he is not sincere, he will fail to realize a blessing. Let us, then, all study how to pray daily, on every suitable occasion; and let us pray intelligently, sincerely, earnestly and trustingly.

Vernalis, Cal.

REVELATION is very long and very broad and very deep, and life is very short. There is no time to waste. The man who does not see revelation and human life in this proportionate revelation is unfit to be a minister of Jesus Christ. The man who thinks the circle of biblical knowledge is run is too ignorant to teach others.—Howard Crosby.

A BITTER word may make a wound that will never heal. A kind word may win a friend that will never turn. A caution may save a soul; and yet silence is sometimes more stinging, and at other times more soothing, than any word.

FEET WASHING.

Force of the Command and Bearing on the Divine Life.

E. K. TEETER.

"Ye ought to wash one another's feet." More have been quibbling about the force of this quotation; ministers have denied that it is a command because it is not expressed in the usual form of a command; but it is clear enough to any reasonable mind that it carries with it all the binding force of any other command, whether it is expressed in the form of a positive command or not, for the injunction was given by the highest authority known to the Christian, the authority of Jesus Christ to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth." Now, if we examine our dictionaries, we find that a command is an order or direction given by authority. It is not important in what language or words it is expressed, it is binding. Any person may order or direct, but if he has no authority, it is not strictly a command. If given by authority you are liable as an offender, if you slight the command. The above quotation is given in the form of an injunction, but with *all the force* of a command. As it is given by authority, any disobedience to it is just as truly accompanied by the penalty pronounced as is the violation of any civil law of our government. The penalty pronounced, upon condition of Peter's rejection of the offer of the Master to wash his feet, is just as applicable to us to-day as it was to Peter. "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me." This carries with it all the force that can possibly be attached to any command, and why should one reject a practice so easily performed at so great a risk.

The unprofitable servant was "cast into utter darkness," because he neglected what he *ought* to have done. Matt. 25: 27-30. Let us consider well the importance of doing what the Lord and Master says we *ought* to do, and the awful consequences of slighting the means of salvation. Feet washing symbolizes the inner cleansing of the heart from the pollutions of sin, with which the Christian worshiper after his regeneration comes in contact. But the practice of obedience to the command of feet washing has another important bearing on the divine life, which is forcibly brought out in the following words: "If I then, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." Evidently meaning if the Lord and Master so humbled himself as to wash the servant's feet, they had no room to consider it beneath them to wash one another's feet.

Therefore they *ought* to do it. Not only as a duty to render obedience to the command, but that it may create or foster a spirit of humility among them, bringing them more nearly upon a common level, "promoting the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace." Eph. 4: 3. And so realizing the importance of the new commandment, "that ye should love one another as I have loved you." John 13: 34.

When burdened with a consciousness of our short comings, then it may well afford us relief to wash one another's feet, to symbolize the inner cleansing that we so much need, even after we have been washed, bathed. For as we mingle with the world we unconsciously come in contact with its sins and pollutions. The practice of feet washing, therefore has a two-fold significance, and even if "clean, every whit," secures us against the danger of losing our part with Christ. For surely there is danger of falling. Heb. 6: 6.

I do not feel the least desire to controvert the oft repeated statement that the object or purpose of washing the disciples feet, as recorded in John 13, was to teach a lesson of humility. Very good so far, but was that all? No indeed. If no more had been intended then Christ would not have urged it so strongly, by precept and example upon the disciples to practice after that, and Paul would not have required the practice as a condition to entitle a poor widow to public charity, nor would Peter have been warned of the certainty of losing his part with Christ. If humility has any bearing on the divine life of the Christian, why not then practice that which fosters it? Why pretend to profess in the divine life and reject that which will surely aid us on our way to glory. What then is humility worth in the sight of God? "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." I Peter 5: 5. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." Matt. 18: 4. Can any one willfully practice a virtue and not become stronger? or reject it and not become weaker when he knows he ought to practice it? No doubt some of those who speak light of feet washing might be truthfully told "what I do thou knowest not now," but peradventure they may know, only when it is eternally too late!

LET your religion be seen. Lamps do not talk, but they do shine. A lighthouse sounds no drum, it beats no gong, yet far over the waters its friendly light is seen by the mariner.

THE living Christian—pure of heart and unspotted by the world—is the best preacher of the gospel in these days.